

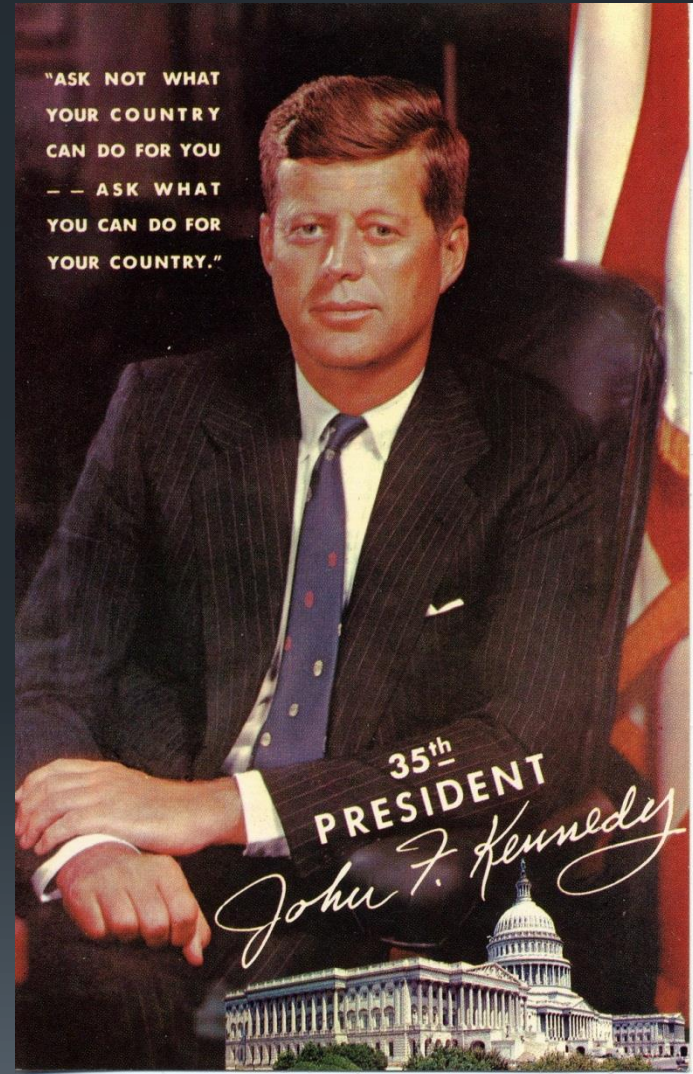


MODERN UNITED STATES HISTORY

US PRESIDENTS AND POLICIES, 1961 – THE PRESENT

John F. Kennedy and the Space Race

- It was John F. Kennedy who first committed the nation to the idea that public service was a responsibility.
- Kennedy is most famous for his courageous leadership during the Cuban Missile Crisis, during which he showed great restraint in dealing with an aggressive Soviet Union in Cuba.
- John F. Kennedy committed the United States to the idea of sending a man to the moon, and returning him safely to the Earth by the end of the 1960s.
- Although he would not live to see it – President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 – the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) would land a man on the moon in July of 1969.



The Space Race and Famous Astronauts

- After the Soviet Union launched Sputnik into outer space in 1957, many Americans became motivated to pursue “the Space Race.” In addition to seeking knowledge about the universe, the space race was as way to show off missile technology!
- John Glenn was the first American to go into outer space. (**NOTE:** Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet Cosmonaut, was the first man in space.)
- Neil Armstrong was the first man to set foot on the moon. As he stated, “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind!”
- Sally Ride was the first woman to go into space. She went on board the space shuttle *Challenger*.



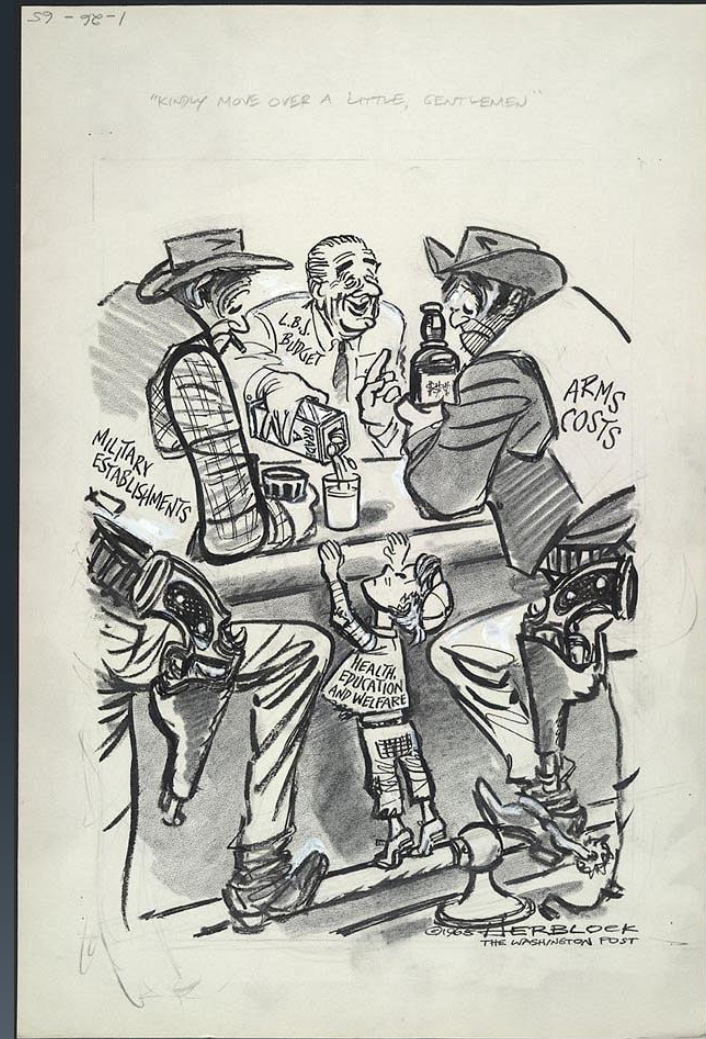
Accomplishments of NASA

- The Voyager Missions – Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 – were sent out into space during the 1970s. Both satellites continue to collect information and images of the Cosmos.
- The Space Shuttle program, which started in the early 1980s and continued until just last year, was one of the most effective programs of space exploration in world history.
- The Hubble Space telescope, after some initial problems focusing it's lenses, has become even more effective at gathering images and information about the solar system than the Voyager missions.
- The Mars Rover began explorations of the “Red Planet” during the 2000s.

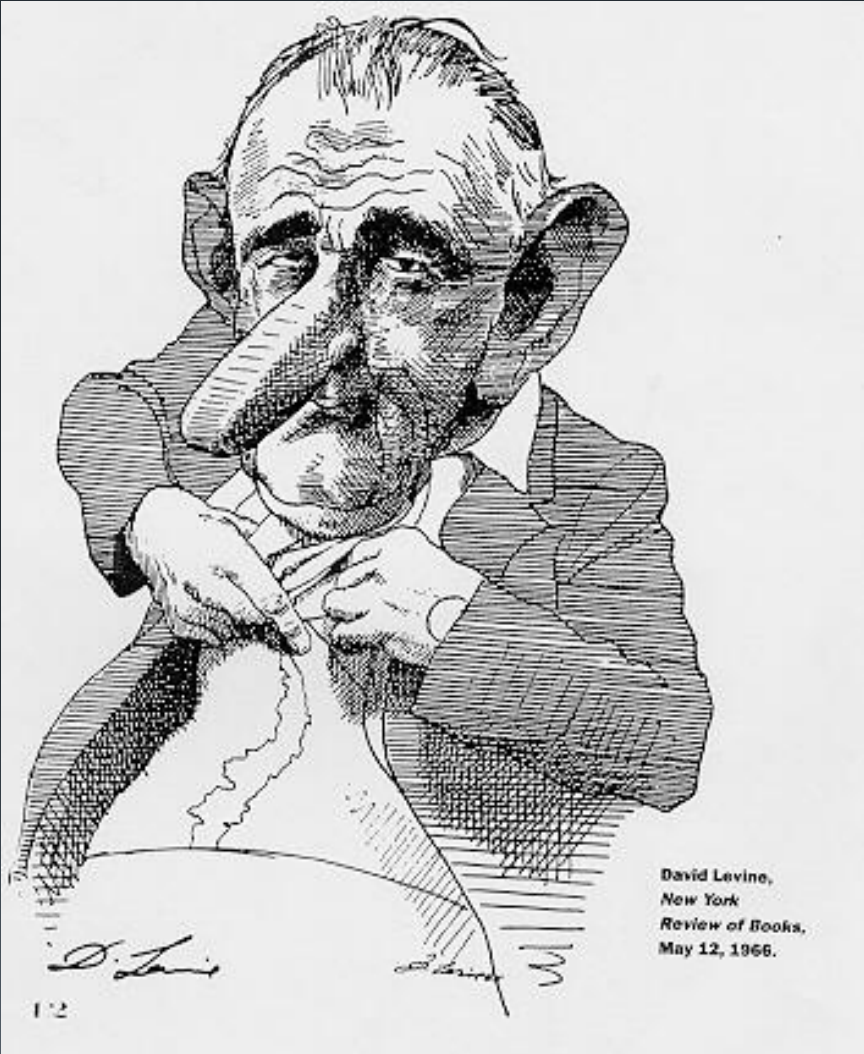


Lyndon Baines Johnson's Great Society

- As President of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson found himself in a very difficult position. He was a disciple of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and wanted for the government to provide help for the poor in the form of education, health care, and welfare programs. However, he was also President at the height of the Cold War – meaning that much of the budget was devoted to military spending and the war in Vietnam. LBJ envisioned a program he called The Great Society: a nation powerful enough to support both it's military and it's domestic affairs. Both guns and butter! He supported Medicaid, Medicare, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Head Start, and many other programs for public welfare. However, he couldn't afford to pay for the programs during the escalating Vietnam War.



Lyndon Baines Johnson's Tenure in Office



"If I left the woman I really loved – the Great Society – in order to get involved with that bitch of war on the other side of the world, then I would lose everything at home. All my programs. All my hopes to feed the hungry and shelter the homeless. All my dreams to provide education and medical care to the browns and the blacks and the lame and the poor. But if I left that war and let the Communists take over South Vietnam, then I would be seen as a coward and my nation would be seen as an appeaser, and we would both find it impossible to accomplish anything for anybody anywhere on the entire globe. Oh, I could see it coming all right."

- **President Lyndon Baines Johnson** in his **Memoirs of the Presidency**

Nixon and the Watergate Scandal

- Richard Nixon's Presidency was a surprisingly mixed bag. He was able to open up communist China to diplomacy. Relations with the Soviet Union seem to have improved. He passed legislation to ensure better pay for women, to clean up the nation's Air and Water supplies, and generally established a very progressive administration.
- However, he was also deeply paranoid, and perfectly willing to lie in order to defend his administration. The Watergate Scandal, during which the President hired burglars in order to steal the secrets of the Democratic Party in the 1972 Presidential election, eventually did in President Nixon. Facing impeachment and almost certain removal from office, Nixon resigned in 1974.

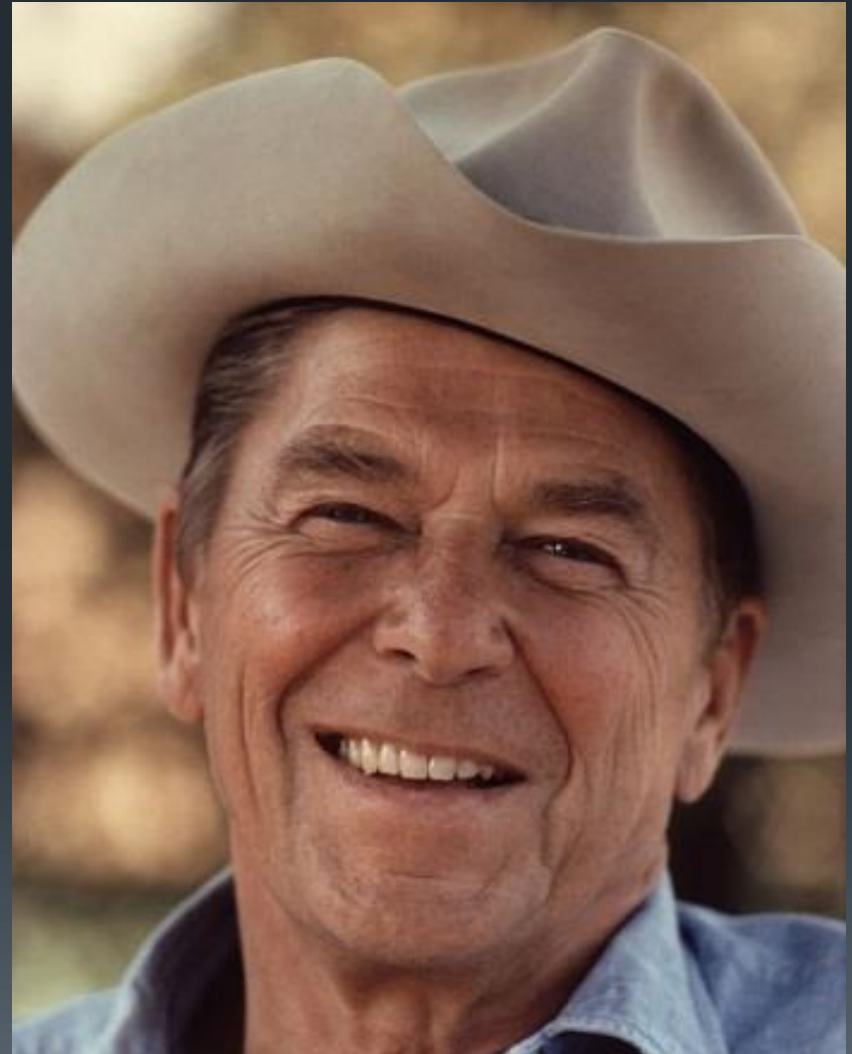


Ronald Reagan and the Conservative Revolution of the 1980s

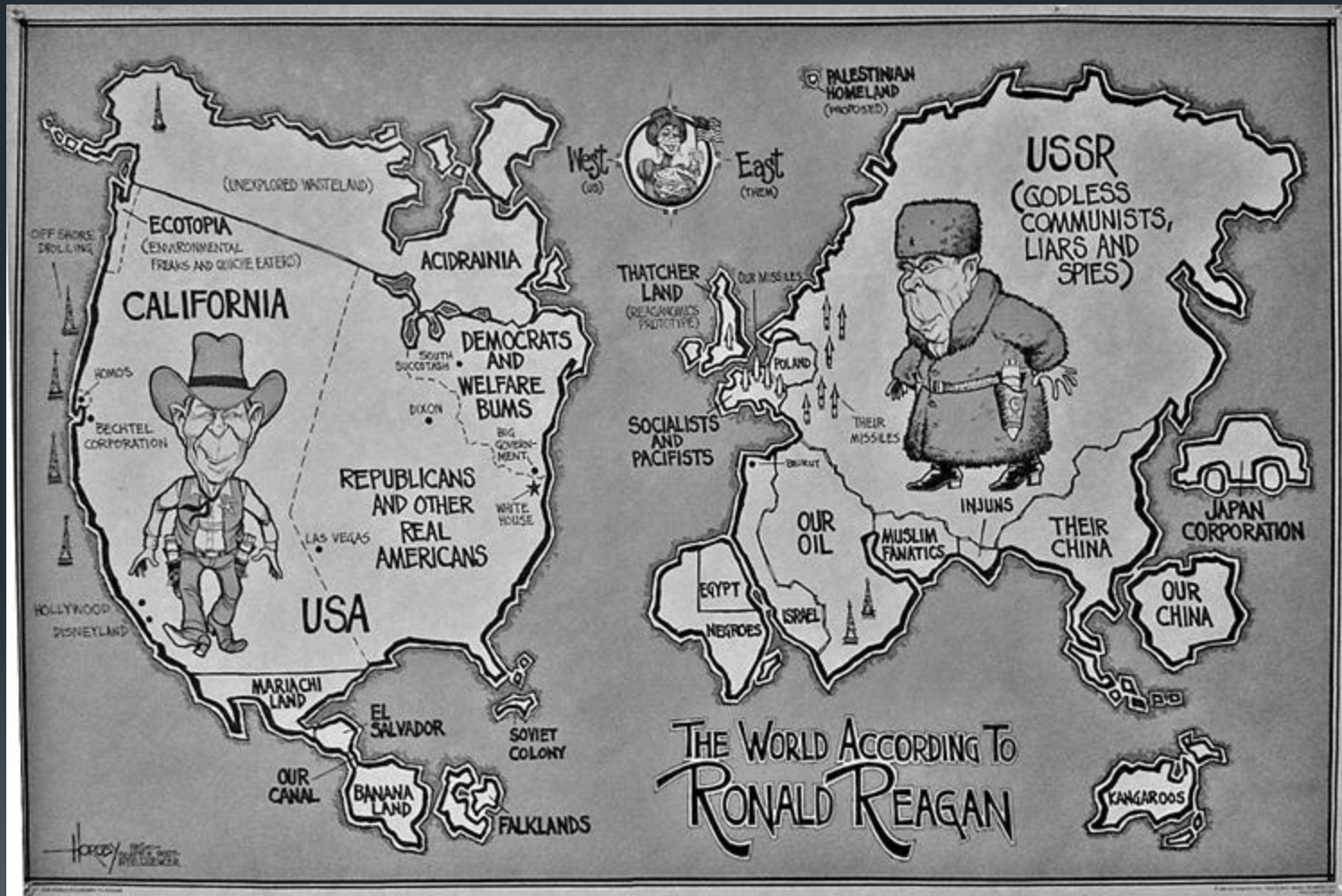
Ronald Reagan was elected President in 1980. While in office, a “conservative revolution” took place, leading to changes in the way many Americans viewed the role of the government.

“Government is not the solution to our problems... Government is the problem.”

As President, Reagan sought to (1) lower taxes (although he raised them during his first term), to (2) shrink the size of the national government and allow the states greater power, to (3) appoint conservative judges and justices to the Supreme Court, and to (4) expand the military and increase military spending to fight the “Evil Empire” of the Soviet Union (USSR) from a position of strength. He wanted to fund a Space Defense Initiative most Americans laughingly called the Star Wars Missile Defense.

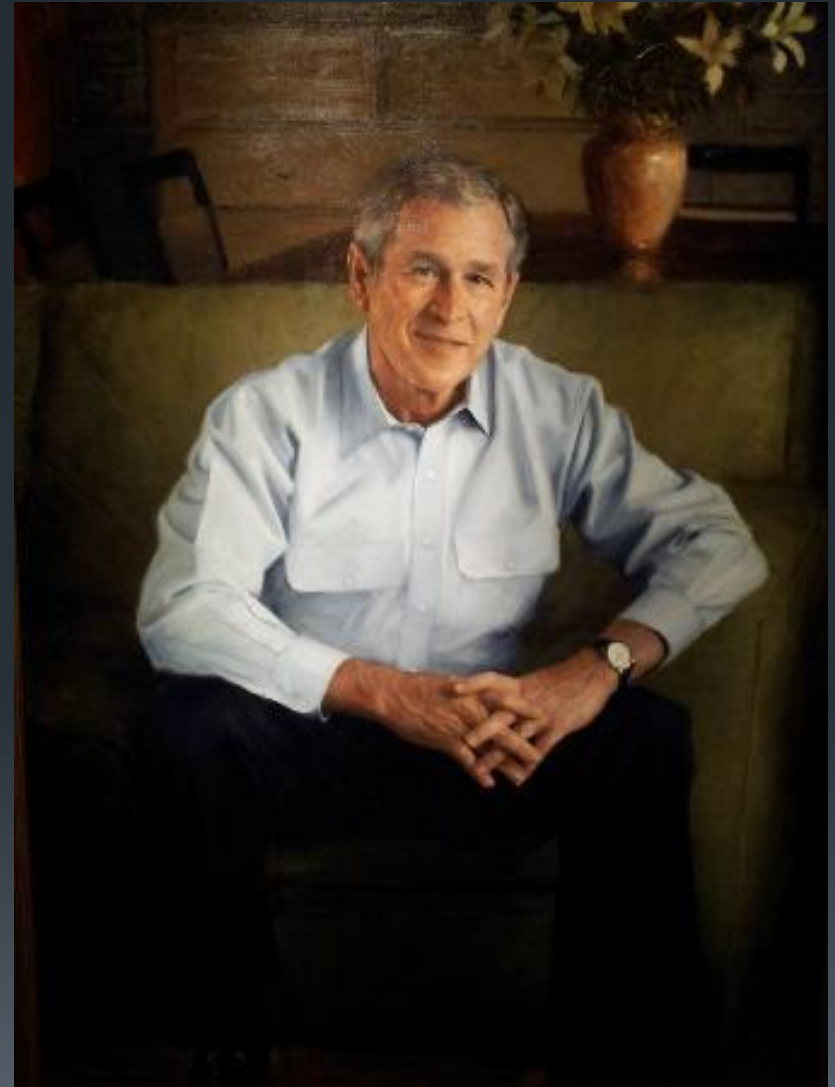


Ronald Reagan – Anti-Communism



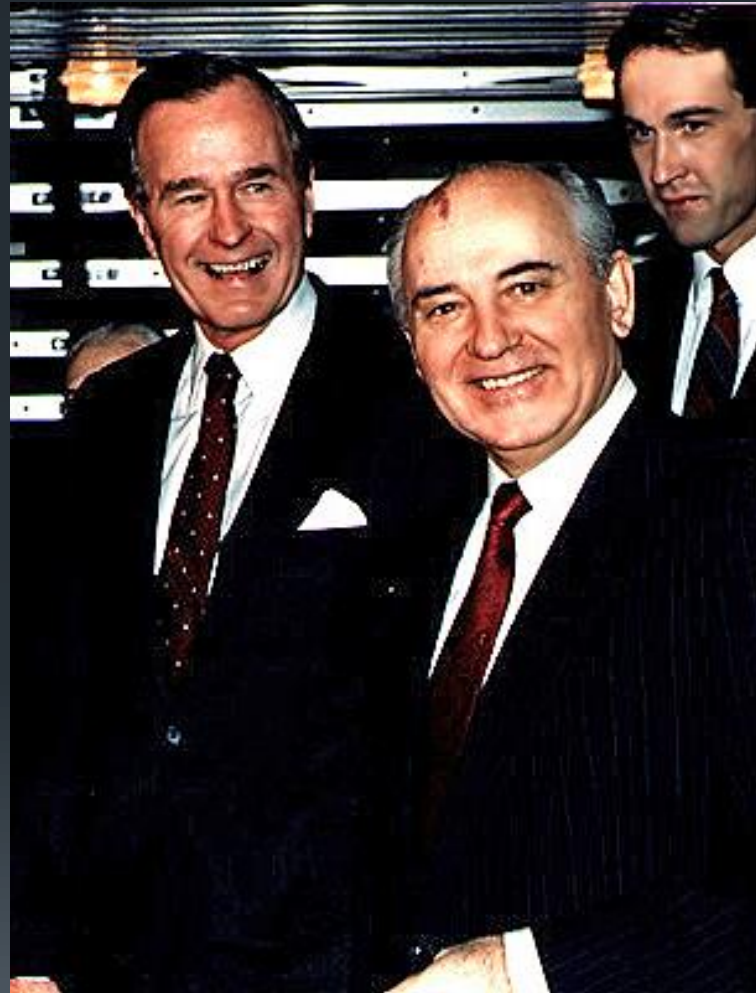
Reagan's Continuing Influence

- The Virginia SOLs insist that Ronald Reagan had a lasting influence in the form of conservatism in the 1990s and beyond, for example:
- 1. George H.W. Bush's Policies. The first Bush had been Reagan's Vice President and was undoubtedly influenced by Ronald Reagan. This is pretty much true.
- 2. "Centrist" President Bill Clinton. Many of Bill Clinton's accomplishments included traditional Republican ideas like free trade and welfare reform.
- 3. Conservatism of the 1990s. For example the no-tax pledges and "Contract with America" which Newt Gingrich's followers articulated in opposition to Bill Clinton in the 1990s.
- 4. George W. Bush. Probably not fair to blame any of this on Ronald Reagan, but there were a few advisors who came were brought back into government for the first time since the 1980s and 1990s, like Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld...



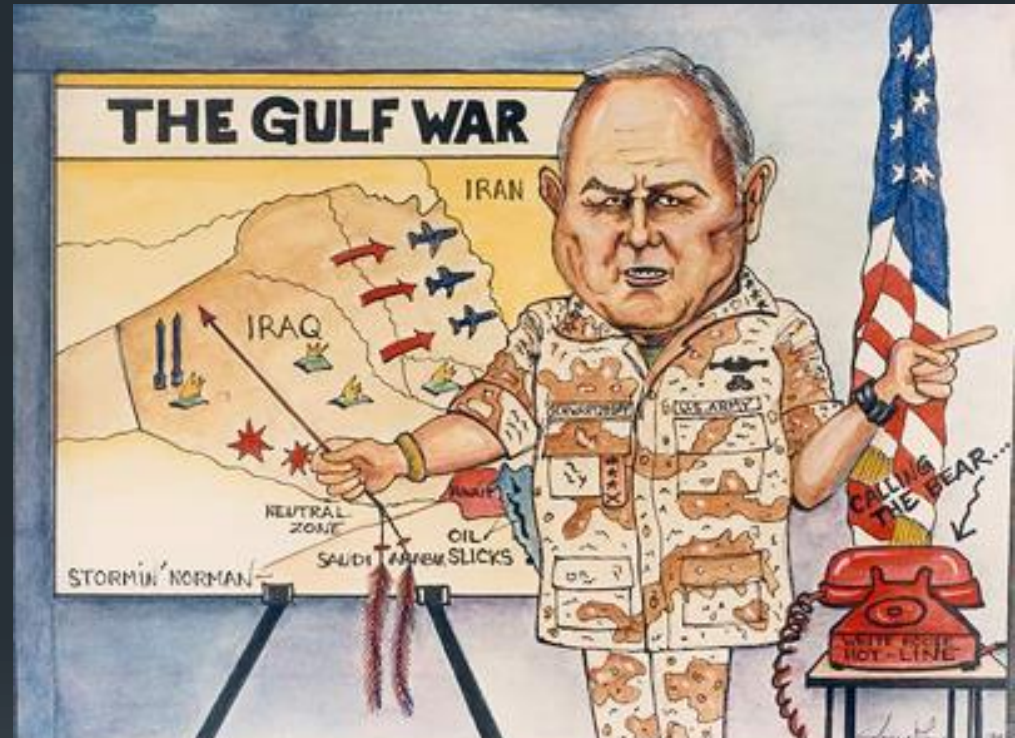
George H.W. Bush – The Cold War Ends

- As President of the United States, George H.W. Bush inherited a period of change internationally like no other. The Soviet Union collapsed during his first term in office, and nations in Eastern Europe abandoned their commitment to communism. In Germany, a nation which had been divided since 1945 reunified. Meanwhile, in Yugoslavia, a nation which had been help together by totalitarian dictators since 1919 fell into chaos. George H.W. Bush's job was to establish a "New World Order" from the chaotic times. And he did a pretty good job of it in retrospect.



George H.W. Bush – The Persian Gulf War

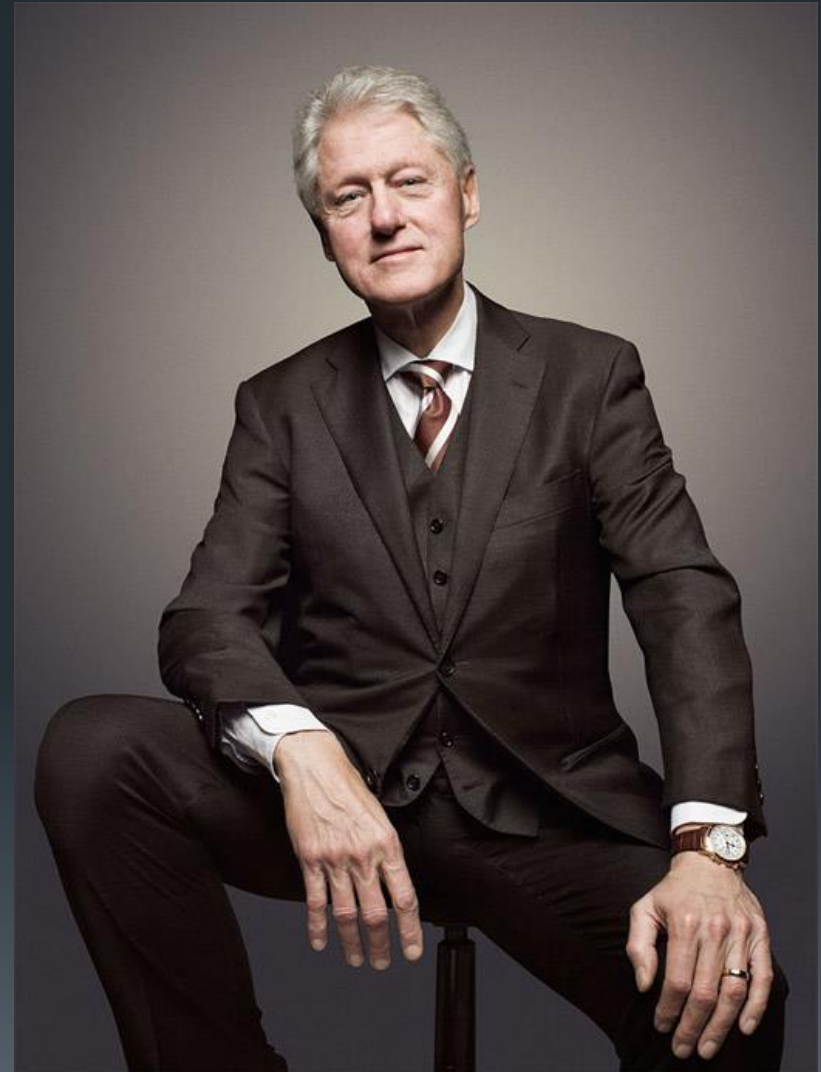
- During the Persian Gulf War, the United States led a coalition of nations in an assault to liberate the tiny, sovereign nation of Kuwait. In the summer of 1990, Kuwait had been invaded by Saddam Hussein's Iraq.
- The Persian Gulf War was a speedy victory over aggression, fought largely using superior American air power. Americans stationed in Saudi Arabia launched a two pronged invasion to (1) liberate Kuwait, and (2) punish Iraq for having used military aggression to disturb the balance of power in the Middle East.
- Kuwait was liberated and Iraq was punished; however, Hussein would remain in power.
- For the first time in the history of the United States, women served in combat positions during this war.



Norman Schwarzkopf and Colin Powell rose to great fame and prominence by delivering nightly updates on the progress of the Persian Gulf War. Worried Americans watched reports from embedded journalists on the front lines nightly on CNN.

William Jefferson “Bill” Clinton

- During the Clinton years, Americans enjoyed prosperity for an extended period of time. Forced to cooperate with a Congress which was dominated by conservatives like Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, Clinton passed a variety of laws:
- NAFTA – the North American Free Trade Agreement.
- Formal recognition of the nation of Vietnam – some twenty years after the Vietnam War had come to a close.
- Formal recognition of Nelson Mandela's post-apartheid government in South Africa.
- Clinton encourage a NATO led intervention in Yugoslavia while he was President of the United States.
- DOMA: The Defense of Marriage Act.



George W. Bush – September 11, 2001

- While George W. Bush – the son of President George H.W. Bush – was President of the United States, the nation was attacked by Islamic fundamentalist terrorists in a murderous plot. Four airplanes were hijacked and used as missiles – murdering thousands of innocent Americans at the World Trade Centers in New York, at the Pentagon in Virginia, and in a Pennsylvania Field near Shanksville, PA.
- George Bush spent much of his eight years in office responding to the terrorist attacks both domestically and internationally.



George W. Bush – Afghanistan & Iraq

- The War in Afghanistan was a direct result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist government which had sponsored and supported Al-Qaeda during the years leading up to the terrorist attacks, was overthrown. American soldiers have been attempting to secure the region and help to build a democracy there ever since.
- In 2003, George Bush invaded Iraq. This nation had very little to do with terrorism; however, after incorrectly claiming that the Iraqis had “weapons of mass destruction,” they were invaded. Saddam Hussein was captured and killed.
- In order to help maintain the security of the nation and gather information to prevent terrorist attacks, the United States Congress passed the Patriot Act during this period. It allowed the government to collect information from e-mails and telephone conversations which Americans had, in order to collect evidence against terrorist organizations and make pre-emptive strikes against murderous groups like Al-Qaeda



The Cold War Era Policies

During the Cold War with the Soviet Union, from 1945 – 1991, the United States attempted to influence other nations using a variety of foreign policies. Three of the most effective ways were –

1. **Foreign Aid – Money**
2. **Humanitarian Aid – Food and Medicine**
3. **Support for Human Rights**



Many of the same methods the United States used in order to stop the spread of communism are used presently in order to stop the spread of radical ideologies, like terrorism.

Modern Immigration – Asia and Latin America

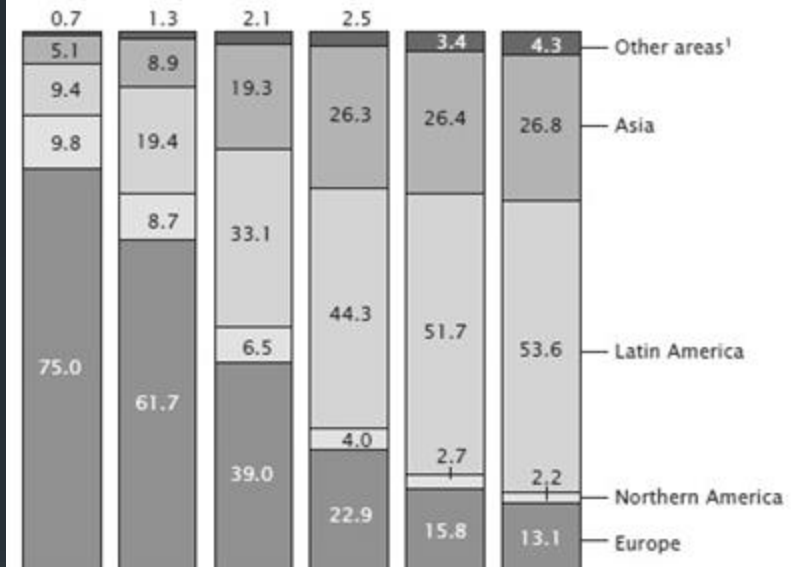
- Since the 1960s, changes in immigration laws have led to more immigration from Asia and Latin America:

Japan
China
The Philippines
India
Mexico
Central America
The Caribbean

- Many of these immigrant groups have become politically influential. For example, Cuban-Americans have continued to support a strong stance against the Castro regime in Cuba. The swing state of Florida often hinges on Cuban-American voters.
- Most immigrants come to America motivated by a desire for political freedom and economic opportunity.

Percent Distribution of Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth: 1960 to 2007

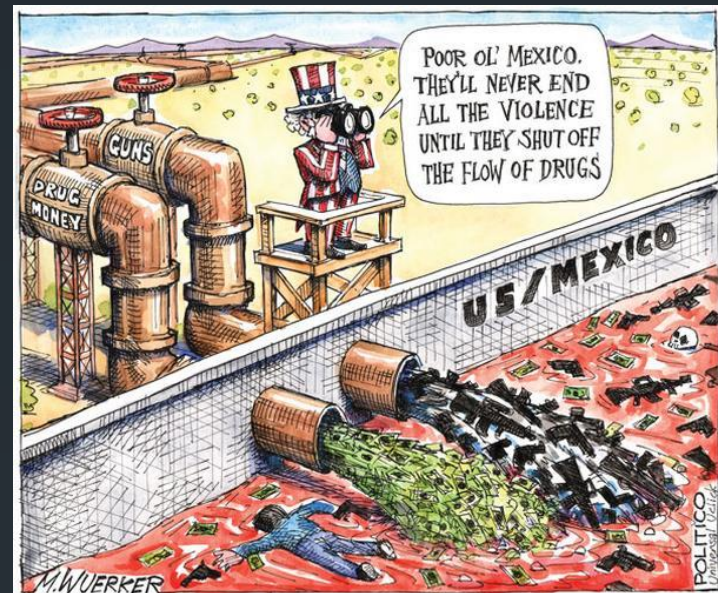
(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www/)



Immigrants to the United States of America fill in the lowest paying jobs – allowing small companies to make higher profits. The ethnic diversity of the United States improves, and diversity in music, arts, and literature is all ameliorated, as well.

Modern Immigration – The Costs

- Immigrants – and particularly those who immigrate to the United States illegally – put burdens upon the United States government:
 1. A strain is placed upon government services which reach out to poor populations.
 2. Hospitals which treat immigrants who have no health insurance must either eat the loss or pass it on to other customers – causing higher health care premiums.
 3. Schools must accommodate immigrants and differentiate instruction for students by employing bilingual teachers at great cost.
 4. In order to enforce the borders of the nation, federal agents must be employed and supplied at great cost.
 5. Because there are already so many illegal immigrants in the United States – some of whom have children who are American citizens – there is a need for a pathway to citizenship for Americans.



Satellites, Technology, the Information Age

- The improvements in technology and the expansion of media have led to better forms of communication and more informative media outlets which can produce news stories virtually 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The constant barrage of information has changed the way businesses work and the way individuals carry out day to day tasks.
- Satellite TV, cable news networks, cellular phones, and the internet have changed the way Americans live.
- Technology and access to news has made Americans more informed – although it all seems a little confusing sometimes!



Technology and the Changing Workforce

- Technology has changed the world we live in, and therefore, businesses have changed their expectations for employees.
- Many employers expect all of their new hires will have computer literacy, the ability to engage with new forms of technology, and the ability to communicate with customers using that technology.
- Telecommuting to work is now commonplace in many industries.
- Working online is expected in most jobs.



Medical Advances Save Lives

- Jonas Salk developed a vaccine to prevent polio, saving millions of lives, and gave it away to the world for free.
- Dr. Charles Drew, an African-American doctor, developed a method for blood banking which saved millions of lives.
- Effective treatments for AIDS, an auto-immune disease caused by the HIV virus were developed in the 1990s, in time to help many HIV-positive patients recover and survive.
- Doctors continue to make gains against deadly pandemic diseases. Life expectancy and quality of life both improve as a result.

